

and realize this is a time, possibly, to have this terrible loss solidify the drive for peace in the Middle East.

THE BALANCED BUDGET

Mr. EXON. Mr. President, there is a great deal of rhetoric going on today about where the Nation is going with regard to the balanced budget that this Senator supported for a long, long time. I remind the Senate it was this Senator who voted with the near majority to reach the required number of votes for setting a constitutional amendment for a balanced budget. I have been known as a conservative Democrat for a long, long time, who has been against the wild-eyed spending that has engulfed our Nation for far too long. I stand ready with Senators on both sides of the aisle to march forward if we can, in a bipartisan fashion, not dictated by the budget resolution that was passed in the Senate.

The first thing I would like to do is address some of the talk that is going on today, talk I am very fearful of impinging upon the basic tenets of our Government. It seems to me the majority of Republicans in the Senate and the majority of Republicans in the House, at least their leadership, are now, unfortunately, working their way to try and thwart the rightful duties guaranteed under the Constitution to the President with regard to the veto process.

This is all centered now around the extension of the debt ceiling. I think it is time, now, we strip aside the facade that the Republicans have fashioned about their objections to raising the debt limit.

If you examine the Republican bill and reasonably add up the numbers, you discover the necessity by the Republicans to raise the debt ceiling by \$1.8 trillion, from its present \$4.9 trillion to \$6.7 trillion by the year 2002. This is the best kept secret in Washington.

It is necessary for them to raise the debt ceiling to help accommodate their \$245 billion tax break for the wealthy and cover the ever-increasing interest costs resulting therefrom. It is significant to note that in the Republican bill, they are increasing in the short term the National debt by \$600 billion in the years 1996 to 1997.

Since this is the Republican's clearly needed goal, why do they refuse to do it now—to avert the threat of a train wreck? Such action, if it were taken by the Republicans, would avert playing Russian roulette with the economy and would avert the cloud on the economy that would be caused. Clearly, if we do not raise the debt ceiling, it would result possibly in closing down Government and defaulting on Uncle Sam's obligations for the first time in its history in not issuing Social Security checks.

Mr. President, this is wrong. The process that the Republican leadership in the House and Senate are on right

now in this regard is wrong from every standpoint, as I see it.

I am sure that the Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate will pass the conference report. I am just as sure that President Clinton will veto that bill, and he would be right to do so.

The Republicans do not have the votes to override a Presidential veto. And I am glad they do not. We will eventually have to sit down and start crafting a workable budget together.

I pledge cooperation, but not capitulation. To that end, all should know where this Senator stands and where many other Senators stand who want a balanced budget. Playing games with the debt ceiling is not a yearly casino night at the local men's club. The Republicans should not be gambling with the full faith and credit of the United States.

These budget negotiations are delicate, and they will take time. At the very least, we should extend the debt ceiling into early next year.

The same is true with the next continuing resolution. We should not be taking hostages in these negotiations.

Second, we cannot, and will not, accept the Republican's current level of reductions in projected Medicare and Medicaid requirements. These are extreme, and they are excessive. They must be pared back if there is any hope of winning Democratic approval.

The same is true with tax breaks for the rich and the tax increases for working families eligible for the earned-income tax credit. Deny it as much as you want, but there is a relationship between the size of the tax breaks for the wealthy and the Medicare expenditures. The tax breaks have to be scaled back and targeted more toward middle-income Americans.

There are, of course, many others areas that will be on my list, particularly with regard to rural America which has been mauled in this budget. But I wanted to give you at least what I believe is the starting point for a balanced budget that will win bipartisan congressional support and the signature of the President of the United States.

I say to my colleagues on the other side, instead of trying to see who will blink first, why do not we try to see eye to eye on a few of these issues? That is what the American people want. That is what they deserve.

I stand ready to be of assistance to anyone on either side of the aisle in coming together where both sides are going to have to give, and give on issues that they feel very strongly about. It is in the interest of the United States of America, though, to get away from this Russian roulette that we are now headed toward, obviously with regard to the debt ceiling extension.

Mr. President, I say again, come, let us reason together.

Mr. President, I thank the Chair. I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the hour of 12:30 p.m. having arrived, the Senate will now stand in recess until the hour of 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:35 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m.; whereupon, the Senate reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. Helms).

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Ms. SNOWE). Without objection, it is so ordered.

PARTIAL-BIRTH ABORTION BAN ACT

Mr. DOLE. Madam President, we have agreed to take this bill up at 2 o'clock to accommodate a lot of our colleagues who were on a plane all night. I thank the Senator from New Hampshire for not objecting to that process.

We are going to take up H.R. 1833, which is a bill to ban partial-birth abortions, and I think it is worth noting this bill passed by an overwhelming majority in the House. I know there will be efforts to amend the House bill and refer the bill to committee. I urge my colleagues to reject those efforts, because it is a straightforward bill. This isolates one procedure, one used up to the ninth month of pregnancy, and one procedure alone. It is not calling into question some of the larger abortion issues that so often divide us.

The American Medical Association's Council on Legislation voted unanimously to enforce H.R. 1833. A member of that council described it as not "a recognized medical technique."

The overwhelming majority vote in the House—including both those who consider themselves pro-choice and pro-life—underscores that this bill deserves immediate passage. After hearings and committee work in the House, nothing will be served by further delay. Those who seek to amend it are in effect trying to deprive this bill of any real meaning or significance.

The only people in America trying to defeat this bill are abortion extremists who believe that no compassion, no common sense, should ever get in the way of an anything-goes approach. I do not think reasonable people, whatever their views on abortion, agree with that position.

Opponents of this bill know that. As a result, we will instead hear soothing claims that opponents only want to amend the bill. There are those, for example, who argue that this bill needs to be amended to provide for an exception in cases where the life of the mother is at stake.